

She's The Sun by EvieSmallwood

Series: [the tales of short stack and string bean \[4\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M, a poet, i have so much love for my string bean boy, milkshakes and fries in a diner anyone?, with a sidenote of extreme fluff?, you guys mike is So Deep

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Summary:

Studying at Benny's turns into... not studying.

She's The Sun

There's a pile of fries between them—still warm and extra salty, just how she likes them.

Mike shifts on the seat across from her, the vinyl squeaking as he moves. He's hunched over and concentrating so hard on his homework, if he gets any closer he'll be *touching* his paper.

There's a line between his eyebrows. He bites his lip, which draws her attention to his mouth. She stares a little too long, a fry hanging forgotten from her fingers.

That, of course, is when he chooses to glance up at her.

"Did you need something?"

He looks so amused. El kicks his leg with her foot, blushing. "Shut up."

Mike grins. Then he's going back to his homework, just when she'd almost had him.

"Mike."

"Hmm."

"*Mike.*"

"Mmmm... Yeah?" A word here, a word there. Scrawled on lined paper; small, chicken scratch writing.

Ugh.

"Whatcha doin?"

Usually, his face will light up when she asks a question like that. He'll start rambling on, all passionate and happy to share. This time, though, he hunches further over his paper.

"Nothing."

El frowns, suddenly a little unsure. After a few seconds of studying him, during which his posture doesn't change at all, she deflates in her seat.

El picks at the fries, which suddenly don't seem so appetizing.

"Mike?"

"Uh-huh?"

"I'm cold."

"Huh."

Rude, El thinks. She kicks his leg, a little harder than she meant to (kinda).

Mike winces, hissing, "Rude!"

El rolls her eyes. She moves, sliding into his side of the booth, jostling him a bit. He makes a small noise of protest.

"What, you *don't* want me to sit next to you?"

"You made me smudge," he says.

El wraps her arms around his torso, resting her chin on his shoulder. "Oops."

His arm still obscures whatever's on the page, but she's not really interested in that anymore. She's too swept up in the clean, familiar smell of his shampoo.

Mike leans into her a little, but he's still not giving her all his attention. It's kind of annoying, but also a little cute. She starts counting his freckles but gets distracted when she finds constellations mixed in.

Sometimes El gets so... full up when she's with him. There's so much she's feeling all at once.

She can't really help herself when she leans forward and kisses his

cheek.

Almost instantly, his face flushes and his grip on his pen loosens a little.

Success, El thinks giddily. She does it again, grinning when he finally gives up and turns to her.

“Hi,” she says.

Mike matches her smile. He reaches up and tugs on a strand of her hair, but not hard enough to pull it from the scrunchie. “Hey yourself.”

“You were ignoring me.”

Something in his eyes softens a little. He pulls her, almost so that she’s practically on his lap. “I suck, huh?”

“A little,” she agrees regretfully.

El means it as a joke, but he only holds her tighter, resting his forehead against hers. “We were supposed to hang out and it’s almost curfew. I *totally* suck.”

“We still have time,” El says.

“Yeah, like, half an hour. You can’t do anything in thirty minutes.”

She looks up from his fingers, which she’d been playing with—lacing then with her own and studying the palm of his hand. “I don’t wanna do anything.”

“Anything at all?”

His eyes have kind of darkened. The space between them is closing, and then his lips are on hers. It always feels like she’s exploding when they kiss. She wonders if he feels the same way.

El pulls back, but he chases her lips, fingers grazing her cheek. Then he kisses her nose, her forehead; all chaste and soft. She’s totally gonna melt into a puddle of goop.

He moves to her ear. "That tickles," she protests, burrowing against him.

Mike blushes. "Sorry."

El tucks her head under his chin. "So what are you writing, anyway?"

"It's, um..." he wipes his nose, where some of her lip gloss somehow ended up. "It's an outline. For a book."

"A book?"

Yeah, a book—y'know, a cover, words inside?

Shut up, you mouthbreather.

"I've been thinking a lot," he starts, sounding a little nervous. "About what we went through, and all. And the stuff we've seen. I..."

"You want to write about it?"

"Sort of," he nods, and she sees a sort of spark ignite. "I'd change a lot of things—the names, maybe have it set in a city instead of a town, or something."

El leans over the notebook, eyes grazing over the hard-to-read scrawl.

"I was kind of worried you wouldn't want me to do it—I mean, it's about you. Sort of."

She shakes her head, unable to keep from smiling because of how excited he is. "I trust you."

Mike squeezes her hand. His leg is bouncing; he's all keyed up, desperately searching her face.

"Yeah?"

"Definitely."

Mike lunges forward, wrapping his arms around her waist. She can't help laughing as he starts pressing kiss after kiss to her face. "You're

super cool, you know that?”

“So are you,” she pokes his cheek. “I mean, you’re writing a *book*.”

“Well, not yet,” he shrugs. “It’s just an outline right now.”

“*Still*.”

Mike lowers his head, a little bashfully. His hair brushes her forehead, which stupidly makes her stomach flip.

“Shortstack?”

He looks up at her; head cocked, dark eyes with his curls falling into them, freckles standing out against his skin. *Wow. Pretty.* She swallows. “Yeah?”

El knows what he wants to say. It’s hovering on the tips of both of their tongues, but in this moment, she thinks they might have transcended it into something deeper. Maybe they just don’t need words sometimes.

“We should go, huh?” Is what comes out instead, with his head leaning against the seat, looking a little regretful.

“I don’t want to.”

“Hopper will yell at me,” he replies. “I’ll call you, though.”

She relaxes. “Promise?”

“Promise, promise,” he says, kissing her again.

She feels safe like that, so close to him in all the ways she can be. It feels a little like it could last forever, but then he draws away.

“C’mon,” he says. “I’ll walk you home.”

El nods. She starts grabbing their things—her bag, the book she’d brought, but when she goes to hand the notebook to him, Mike shakes his head.

“You can read it,” he says. “Tell me if it’s stupid or not.”

“It’s *not* stupid,” she says.

“You haven’t even read it!”

“But I *know*.”

Mike grins. He holds out his hand for her to take, and on the walk home he tells her all about the latest D&D campaign he’s planning.

It’s maybe half past ten when El finally gets around to the notebook. She feels stupidly nervous as she flips through the pages, making sure not to mess any of them up.

He finds her in the rain, one passage reads. He gives her his jacket, takes her hand, and everything changes. On the outside looking in, it doesn’t seem that way. It’s strange, sure; a shivering girl in a yellow shirt from a diner (should it be a diner? too obvious?), with a shaved head, face eclipsed by the beam of a flashlight. So far from normal, but it pales in comparison to the way he feels inside. He doesn’t understand it and it’s a feeling that hasn’t even fully formed yet. It’s like there was a seed there, the whole time, and only just now has anyone bothered to water it or shed light on it. It grows, and grows, and grows—through them—and even if they’re apart (353 days), even if it’s all wilting, she’s the sun, and he loves her, and that’s all that matters. (sidenote: I totally lost my train of thought and none of this makes any sense but blame her, she’s looking at me right now and she’s super pretty, whatever)

El looks skyward before any tears fall onto the paper. She desperately wipes them away, smiling like an idiot.

She can’t believe him. Of course he would write the most romantic thing of all time and make sure he wasn’t there to see her read it.

She’s the sun.

He loves her.

El lunges for the phone on her nightstand, quickly dialing his number. It picks up after the first ring.

“Michael Wheeler, that was the least stupid thing I’ve ever read!”

He laughs. “Hey, shortstack.”

Author's Note:

SHORT STACK RETURNS! I was so overwhelmed with the response to my last fic (Put Your Head On My Shoulder), I couldn’t resist writing more of these two. I’ve decided to make it a series instead of adding onto the fic, because I feel like that one just does well standing alone.

I have? So much fun writing these two idiots? Wow.

Apparently “wow” is my new favourite word.

God I love you guys so much!

Edit, 8/11/18: I’ve totally completely changed this one up, so if you’re re-reading and confused, sorry lol.